DRAMATIC

NEXT week at the Theater will be crowded both with brilliance and variety. Opening Monday we are to have the hilarious "Yankee Consul," while the end of the week will be distinguished by the long expected visit of the Savage English Grand Opera company.

"The Yankee Consul," as most people know, who have kept in touch with eastern theatrical events, was one of the rollicking successes of last season, having been written originally for Raymond Hitchcock. It deals with the life and adventures of a modern Yankee who represents this government in San Domingo. Besides containing any amount of fun, it presents a number of pictures of real life and customs among the islanders, and the scenic investiture is said to be specially strong. The company is managed by the well known John P. Slocum, and the cast is headed by Harry Short, the clever comedian, who has the part of the American consul. The leading woman is Miss Vera Michelena, famed for her work in "The Princess Chic."

The full company is said, with enlarged orchestra, to number 74 people.

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Until Henry W. Savage entered the amusement world with his now famous English Grand Opera company, every impressario who had attempted to sustain a company to give grand opera in English lost a fortune. The history of grand opera in English dates back 50 years, but only in the past 10 years, since Mr. Savage founded his company in Boston, has the music loving public taken seriously to the endeavor. Its work each season has met with increased success. The repertory has been gradually enlarged until now Mr. Savage has to his credit no less than 83 masterpieces produced in the mother tongue.

The company Mr. Savage will present at the Theater next Thursday, Friday and Saturday, represents the best effort of his entire career. There are over a score of prima donnas, tenors, baritones and basses, and a fine choral body of conservatory-bred singers, ambitious and talented. There is hardly one of these that has not an opportunity to understudy the leading principals, many of them being fitted to take a prima donna role on an hour's notice.

One of the soundest features of the company is found in its specially selected orchestra of symphony musicians. These number nearly 50, many of them soloists. As conductors Mr. Savage has two of the best equipped grand opera directors in America. The Chevalley N. B. Emanuel has had 30 years' experience in leading European opera houses, possessing a repertory of 140 masterpieces. Elliott Schenck, the Wagnerian conductor, formerly associated with Walter Damrosch, is one of the few American musicians recognized as a Wagnerian authority.

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"The Missouri Girl," which will be seen at the Grand theater next week, has been on the road continuously for the past 11 seasons. It has probably covered less territory than any other play in the world in the same length of time, on account of playing so many return dates. Manager Raymond soon discovered that he had a great repeater, and has been playing the same theaters year after year to an ever increasing business. Most plays grow stale with the public after a few seasons, and are either shelved or sent out on "one-night stands" at cheap prices with inferior companies; but the case of "The Missouri Girl" is exactly the oppsite. The show is at present doing a record-breaking business, and this in theaters where it has played as high as 10 different engagements.

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The seasons come and go, but "Uncle Tom's Cabin" goes on forever. It will again be seen at the Grand for three nights and a Saturday matinee, commencing next Thursday. As one writer has said, "There runs through this grand story a pathos peculiarly touching and sweet. It speaks the universal language of the heart. It reflects like a mirror the innermost phases of the human emotions. It is more than a play—it is a moral classic. It argues for two of the greatest themes that can engage the mind—human liberty and the immortality of the soul. Notwithstanding the frequent production of this play, it is never produced in the sumptuous manner by other companies as it is in Stetson's. It is like meeting an old friend after a year's absence."

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"Colored acts" will be conspicuous by their absence at the Orpheum next week. However, Lew Sully, of burnt cork minstrelsy fame, will be the headliner. Sully has succumbed to the temptations of modern vaudeville and henceforth has thrown in his lot with the Orpheum circuit. Incidentally the papers printed in the cities in which he has appeared are throwing in a lot of good notices of his patter and songs. Another strong attractions will be The Great Leon, premier illusionist, assisted by Miss Delta Hula and the Two Kings, sensational gymnasts. The serious number on the program which has been arranged to embrace all tastes, is Grace Jackson, lyric soprano, who is down for three solos. "Making the Banjo Talk" is the mission of Dane Claudius and Miss Melody Scarlet. Miss Scarlet was formerly of the Frohman and Julius Kahn companies and is admitted to be the cleverest female banjoist in the world. The motion pictures presented by the kinodrome will have for the feature next week the Great French Steeplechase.

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The next attraction at the Lyric, commencing this afternoon, will be the Innocent Maids company under the direction of T. W. Dinkins. This company is not entirely new to local playgoers, but this season it is bigger and better than ever. In fact, nothing but the title will be recognized by those who have seen it in seasons past. "A Night at Newport" and "The Diamond Palace" are the titles of the two monster burlesques which will make up the program. They are "laugh-makers throughout and introduce the large company in comedy, music and song. To those who like good vaudeville numbers the following acts will appeal: Markle and Moran, dispensers of risibilities; Eugene Jerge, illustrated songs; Deonzo and Elliott, comedy acrobats and barrel jumpers; Aleene and Hamilton, singers and dancers; and Lida Dexter, the statuesque blonde. The leading parts are assumed by John F. Burke, who has the reputation of having made more people laugh than any other performer in the country. His work with the leading burlesque companies in the past has done more than anything else to make those attractions successful.

VERA MICHELENA

In "The Yankee Consul," Salt Lake Theatre Monday Evening.

THEATRE GOSSIP

T. Daniel Frawley is playing in Boston in the support of Raymond Hitchcock, in Richard Harding Davis' play, "The Galloper."

Isadora Duncan, the barefoot dancer, has been forbidden by the police to dance in public in Berlin. Miss Duncan is an American who makes her home in Italy.

It is announced that the receipts of the recent engagement of Sarah Bernhardt in New York amounted to considerably more than $60,000 for seventeen performances.

Frederick Warde, who has given up acting for the present season, will shortly appear in Sacramento upon the lecture platform, when he will talk of Shakespeare and his plays.

The London Scala has been reopened with a revival of "A Royal Divorce," with Mr. Frank Lister as Napoleon, Mrs. Cecil Raleigh as Marie Louise, and Miss Edith Cole as the Empress Josephine.

"Mozart," a poetic drama, by Mrs. Ivy Ashton Root, with Howard Kyle as star, opened at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, last week. The composer Mozart is the central figure of the play. The first production was well received by a large audience.

"Sweet Kitty Bellairs," as interpreted by Bertha Garland, created such a sensation at the Academy of Music, in New York, last week, that David Belasco is looking for another metropolitan theater in which he can place Miss Galland for a long run.

H. S. Northrup, who recently played in this city with Florence Roberts in "Ann La Mont," has been engaged to support William Faversham in "The Squawman," now running at Wallack's theater, New York. Mr. Northrup will also go to London with "The Squawman."

Eleanor Robson will be seen in Clyde Fitch's new play, "The Girl Who Has Everything," at Cleveland, on Feb. 1. Four weeks later she will appear in a new play by Jerome K. Jerome, which has not yet been named. Reuben Fax, Earl Browne, and Miss Sheldon have been engaged for her support.

Klaw & Erlanger have acquired from Hartley Manners the rights to a four-act play, entitled "A Marriage of Reason," which may receive production before the season is over. The play deals with the love, courtship and marriage of an English nobleman with an American girl from Chicago.

Miss Annie Russell, when she returns to New York after her present London engagement, will be seen at the new Astor Theater, in a play by Paul Kester and a piece in blank verse by Richepin and Henri Kain. It is called "Prince Charming," and the French rights in it belong to Sarah Bernhardt.

The first important production of the coming year in London was at His Majesty's theater on January 11th, when Beerbohm Tree staged Stephen Phillips' poetic drama, "Nero," with the magnificence for which he is famous. It is written in blank verse, and divided into prologue and two acts.

General Lew Wallace's "Prince of India" has been dramatized and will be produced next month at the Colonial Theater in Chicago. The press agent sends out account of a handsome cast, the catalogue of the 11 splendid scenes, the names of the designers, scene painters, the length of the baggage cars it will take to hold them—everything but the name of the playwright.

Joseph Brooks, some time ago, secured the rights to a comedy by Frederick Paulding, entitled "Cousin Louisa." Daniel Frohman has purchased an interest in it from Mr. Brooks, and in conjunction with him, will produce it at the Lyceum theater this spring. Miss Mary Van Buren, an actress, who has been very successful on the Pacific coast, has been engaged to act the leading character.

In addition to his new production of Schiller's "Don Carlos" and the six other productions which he has acted this year, Richard Mansfield is reviving "Ivan the Terrible," and the dramatization of Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter." One other revival will be acted for the first time this season when Mr. Mansfield comes to the New Amsterdam theater in March and will be seen in ten roles.

Pauline Chase, who was never much more than a chorus girl in this country, has scored a hit in J. M. Barrie's new play, "Columbine," in London, and Manager Frohman is now preparing to bring her back to this country as the leading lady of the American company which will present the piece on this side of the Atlantic later.

Viola Allen intends to act Helena in "All's Well That Ends Well" in a Shakespearean festival in Chicago next April. It is years since the comedy has been played on the English speaking stage, and even the theaters in Germany very rarely act it. At the same festival, according to present announcements, Wilton Lackaye is to appear as Marc Antony, Shylock and Iago, and Grace George as Imogen and Ophelia.

It now is announced in New York that Clara Morris will be seen again on the stage. She has signed a contract with Henry Miller which binds her to appear in a new play, which will be produced in the early spring under his management. The play is by a young and unknown author and the role Miss Morris will assume is that of the mother of the hero. She is dumb, but it is an important factor in the plot. The entire role will be played in pantomime.

Denman Thompson, the Uncle Josh Whitcomb of "The Old Homestead" fame, is reported to have said the other day at his home in Swanzey, N. H.: "I've been sick, yes; and I'm going to retire for the winter. I'm going to stay right here in West Swanzey. Not South Swanzey. Get out your notebook and put that down, too; I'm going to play Joshua Whitcomb as long as I darned please. I'm 72 years old now. Well, I'm going to play it until I'm 82, or until I'm 92, if I don't pop off."

Acting on the order of Mayor Jeffries, the police of Columbus, O., stopped the play, "Why Girls Leave Home," at the High Street theater. The play had been running a week. It is contended by the mayor that the play is immoral. He objects especially to a road house scene, showing the interior of a building where men and women are represented as drinking. Manager Greenburg said that no other city in the country had stopped the play, except Springfield, Mass.

"There is in France and, I suppose, in America," said Mme. Bernhardt recently, "a strong prejudice against the writing of dramas by actors. The reason for this is not far to seek. Usually the Thespian forgets everything else in her or his striving for purely theatrical effects. His or her knowledge of play writing has been learned not in highways and byways, but in the playhouses. His or her people do things that people do on the stage and nowhere else in the world."

E. H. Sothern has made the following announcement concerning the plans for the future of his artistic alliance with Julia Marlowe: "Next season we plan to produce 'Cymbeline,' 'As You Like It'—in which I shall play Touchstone—and 'King Lear.' In addition to these three revivals we shall also use the six in which we have already been seen, so that we shall next season have a repertory of nine Shakespearean plays. Miss Marlowe and myself hope to be associated professionally for some years to come."

PLAYHOUSES OF THE METROPOLIS

(By Acton Davies.)

NEW YORK, Jan. 22.—If you ask Mr. Henry Miller, the star of "Grierson's Way," for the cause of the comparative failure of H. V. Esmond's new play at the Princess he would probably lay all the blame on the blessed baby, which plays such an important part in two of the principal acts, and I am not at all sure that he wouldn't be right. The play is somber and melancholy enough in every sense of the word, and having very little humor of its own perhaps the first night audience was only too glad to grasp at the absurdity which attended those scenes in which the baby had to play a leading part. According to the city law of New York, while children anywhere from 3 to 9 are permitted to appear on the stage, so long as they neither speak nor dance, a baby in arms has always been placed under the Metropolitan ban. Now for the purposes of this play it was imperative that the child should practically be in swaddling clothes for the poor little youngster hadn't been born when the curtain fell on the first act, and as the second scene was laid a little short of two years later, it can be understood that there wasn't much leeway for the child in the matter of age. What Mr. Miller really should have done in order to insure success of his play on the first night was to have snapped his fingers at the authorities for the moment and used a bona-fide baby at the first performances. The mayor would probably have forbidden the child's appearance on the following day, but even that edict could not have prevented the first performance from possessing the necessary amount of infantile realism. However, wishing to be perfectly above board in the matter and failing to see why it could be any more harmful for a baby to leave its mother's arms for possibly 10 minutes in the course of an evening, than for children of 3 or 4 years older growth to play through an entire performance, Mr. Miller laid the whole matter before Mayor McClellan and asked his consent. The mayor said he was very sorry, but if he allowed this particular baby to appear there would be a glut of infants on the theatrical market. He refused. And Mr. Miller reduced to Hobson's choice, was obliged to cast a mechanical doll for this most important part. The audience never saw the doll's face, but from what they did see of the wit of its bonnet, it could scarcely have possessed a larger cranium if it had been the head pieces of Kaiser Wilhelm and Richard Mansfield combined. In one scene, as the doting foster father—he had married the child's mother in order to shield her from disgrace—was obliged to recite "This little pig went to the market" to one of the mechanical doll's most mechanical set of fingers. The result was so ludicrous that the audience tittered and though the actor, never played with more sincerity and earnestness, the effect of the whole scene was ruined. That there is a strong tinge of Ibsen in this play can be seen from this brief synopsis. The action passes in a flat house at Chelsea. Pamela Kean, the daughter of an old sea captain, has loved Capt. Aynesley Murray, a married man, not wisely but very much too well, finds herself in a desperate situation. Her lover has been sent suddenly to India with his regiment and knows nothing of her plight. Two other men, who live in the flat house, are desperately in love with Pamela. One of these is a crazy young violinist, who has lost his hand in a railway accident, and the other is old Jim Grierson, a man quite ancient enough to be Pamela's father. Grierson, on learning of her situation, offers to save the girl by marrying her. He promises to take her away from England for a couple of years so that no one will know that the expected baby, when it arrives, is not his. Pamela accepts him. The next act, two years later, finds the baby in the center of the stage. He is an even greater tyrant in the Chelsea apartment house than the janitor himself. Pamela's lover, during these two years has written her many letters, but she has not opened one of them. Now, on her return to England she hands the letters to her husband, and begs him to burn them. He leaves the task to her, however, and just as she is about to put the last letter of all into the fire Capt. Murray enters the room. He is a widower now and his first thought on his release has been to come home and marry Pamela. He finds the woman with his unopened letter in her hand. Explanations follow, and finally she tells him that she is married. The baby is brought in, and he plays with it, quite unconscious of the fact that it is his own child. The crippled violinist has overheard the interview between the lovers, and going to old Grierson tells him that the only decent thing that he can do is to make away with himself. According to his idea it is the only way to make Pamela faithful to him. He hands the old man a vial of poison, and going off the stage, Grierson kills himself. Pamela, when she finds him lying dead, rushes upon the stage to be confronted by Murray. But in the first shock of the tragedy, she recoils from him, and turns towards the dead man, crying hysterically, "Jim, my Jim." That's the end of the play. It is easy to understand why with all its fine characterizations and impressive scenes it failed to enhance the gayety of this particular nation. Miss Rebecca Warren, in the most unsympathetic role of the heroine, won a real success by a performance which had both originality and power.

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But if "Grierson's Way" proved lugubrious, no one can ever consider "Bedford's Hope," the new automobile melodrama at the Fourteenth street as a promoter of melancholia. Quite unexpectedly this new play of Lincoln J. Carter's has caught the town. It promises to prove one of the greatest melodramatic successes of many seasons. The thrilling race between an express train, carrying the villain as excess baggage and an automobile, in which the lovely heroine is hastening across the bad lands of Montana to save both her lover's honor and life, carries one back to the old days of "Blue Jeans" and "The Still Alarm"—those halcyon days when the good old Fourteenth Street was the original manufactory of all sorts of stage shocks and thrills. But in all its long career of thrillers, the Fourteenth Street has never sheltered so thrilling a thrill as this one. It knocks all the other race scenes into a cocked hat, at the same moment that it gives spavins to their sprockets and punctures all their tires. This scene will be imitated, of course, there will probably be a perfect plague of stage automobile races now, but the playwright or stage carpenter who aspires to excel this particular scene has certainly got his work cut out for him. So great has been the play's success here that Manager Rosenquest has cancelled all other engagements for this season. The play itself, of course, is merely a more or less mediocre melodrama. Rather better than the average sample of popular priced performances, if anything, but still not startling by any manner of means except in its one great scene.

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At the other end of Fourteenth street another Carter, Mrs. Leslie, has been breaking all the records for box office receipts at the Academy of Music in "Adrea." During her first week of seven performances with $1.50 as the highest price for seats in the house, Mrs. Carter played to over $22,000. This week when she is reviving "Zaza," the receipts promise to be even larger. A good deal of surprise has been expressed that Mr. Belasco should have allowed his principal star to play at cheaper prices at the Academy of Music than she ever has at his own theater—the Belasco. But there is quite an interesting little story back of this move. Two years ago, when Mr. Belasco found that nearly all the principal theaters in the county were closed against him, Manager E. G. Gilmore of the Academy went to him and told him that he could have all the time that he wanted at his theater. Then out of gratitude, Belasco promised Gilmore that Mrs. Carter should play a six weeks' engagement at his house. The move is proving an enormously profitable venture for both the managers.

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Evidently outside of New York, there is very little demand for the plays of George Bernard Shaw. Next week Mr. Arnold Daly, who has been on a tour playing "Candida" and "You Never Can Tell," by far the cleanest if not the cleverest of the Shaw comedies, announces that he will close his season. He declares that he is closing because he finds it impossible to get the bookings which he wants. Be this as it may, the Shaw craze never did amount to much outside of New York, and now it seems to have collapsed entirely. Mr. Daly is now looking for a play by another author.

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There were very few persons who witnessed Miss Bessie Abbott's successful debut at the Metropolitan Opera House Saturday night in "La Boheme," who remembered that she was in any way concerned in the making of a song which created quite a furore in both musical and unmusical circles, some nine or ten years ago. At that time Miss Abbott and her sister were a team of banjoists, and after hearing them one night in a vaudeville theater, Manager E. E. Rice engaged them to appear in his extravaganza, "Little Christopher," at the Garden theater. During the rehearsals he discovered that these young ladies could sing even more charmingly than they could play. So he handed them a song which had just come out, and ordered Miss Bessie to sing it as a solo at the first performance. It made not only the girl's fame but the song's. It was called "I don't want to play in your yard," and would have seemed almost fitting if in answer of the plaudits of the big audience last Saturday night if Miss Abbott could only have favored them with the old familiar strain. Of course it would have shocked Herr Direktor Conried and would have knocked the traditions of the Opera House sky high; but it would have tickled that audience almost to death just the same.

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It is a rather significant fact showing how the wind is blowing in these latter day theatricals that Mr. Weber, for the first time in the history of his famous little music hall has abandoned his Tuesday matinee. The actors in particular are bewailing this decision on Mr. Weber's part. The Weber music hall was always a favorite rendezvous for the stage and operatic celebrities on Tuesday afternoon, as no other theater gave a matinee on that day, the actors and actresses used to flock there in such throngs that at last things came to such a pass that the management had scarcely any seats left for the regular paying public. The consequence was that Mr. Weber found his company tired out by an extra performance without any additional box office receipts to act as a balm for their tired feelings. Since its first night the new skit, "Twiddle-Twaddle" has been immensely improved, but Marie Dressler remains the life and soul of the performance.

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At the other theaters this week the bills are as follows: At the Empire, "Peter Pan;" at the Belasco, "The Girl of the Golden West;" at the Knickerbacker, "Mlle. Modiste;" at the Hudson, "Man and Superman;" at the Savoy, "The House of Silence;" at the Lyceum, "The Lion and the Mouse;" at Daly's, "The Fascinating Mr. Vanderveit;" at the Garden, "The Galloper;" at the Bijou, "The Music Master;" at Field's, "Julie Bon Bon;" at the Casino, "The Earl and the Girl;" at the Criterion, "Alice-sit-by-the-fire;" at the Lyric, "The Babes and the Baron;" at the Star, "The King of the Opium Ring;" at the American, "Confessions of a Wife;" at the Murray Hill, "Happy Hooligan;" at the New Amsterdam, "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway;" at the West End, "Buster Brown;" at the Hippodrome, "A Society Circus;" at the Majestic, "Cashel Byron's Profession;" at the Madison Square, "De-Vries in "A Case of Arson," and "The Braisley Diamond," and at the Metropolis, "The Street Singer."—Copyrighted by the New York Theatrical News Service.

NEWS OF THE LONDON STAGE.

Special Correspondence.

LONDON, Jan. 13.—Like several other American plays of late, C. M. S. McLellan's "The Jury of Fate," has been produced here before being given at home. All the veteran first-nighters crowded into the Shaftesbury theater on Tuesday to see it, for much was expected of the author of "Leah Kleschna"—to say nothing of "The Belle of New York"—and much, of course, was expected of H. B. Irving, the principal figure in the new play, for the late Sir Henry elder son is now sure of his place in the foremost rank of British actors.

At the close of the evening the assembled critics shook their heads savagely, the pit and top gallery were inclined to cheer Irving and to boo the author, and the rest of the audience seemed to be heartily in accord with both actor and author—all of which indicates that the play was out of the ordinary. The critical attitude, of course is: "Don't be conventional, for that betokens the decadence of British Drama; but whatever you do, don't be unconventional." Now McLellan has dared to write an up-to-date morality play—a kind of modern French variation of "Everyman"—and the precise London critics are much worried over it. But it is always sincere often effective, sometimes even melodramatic, and almost invariably interesting. And it is thoroughly well written.

As in "Leah Kleschna" the scene is in France. Rene Delorme, a brilliant young wastrel, after literary success but utter moral failure in Paris, has come to live at his foster-mother's poor little cottage in the country. Staggering home after a riotous night at a neighboring inn, he is confronted by a Dante-like figure of death. He pleads in terror for one more chance, and a majestic personage with other majestic personages on either hand, revealed in glory in the clouds above, in a sort of celestial jury box, grants the request, and tells him he may live his life all over again. So apparently Rene gets born again, remembering vaguely his previous life, for the next glimpse we get of him is 25 years later, on the sixth day of his honey-moon with a naive and charming bride, whose affections he had won from a sturdy mechanic to whom she was betrothed. It is evident enough that he is not profiting by his previous experience, for he is drinking more than is good for him, and is making wicked eyes at the tempting reincarnation of a woman whose heart he had broken in his first career, and who intimates that she has come back to get even with him.

In the next act we see him, a hitherto successful dramatist, on the first night of his latest play, which has proved a failure. The temptress has helped him to break his wife's heart, and he completes the disaster by coming home in a drunken fury and insulting everybody. The next glimpse we get of him is a year or two later. He has become a wild-eyed, shabby demagogue, stirring up lust of blood in the hearts of workmen disposed to be law-abiding. He leads them to attack a great foundry, whose manager is that same David Martine to whom his wife had been betrothed before Rene Delorme won her away. Then we have the melodramatic attack on the foundry, and a scene between the depraved husband, the neglected wife, and the man she has come to love again. Rene shoots at David, but kills his wife instead. That settles it. There is no question now but that the man's second existence has been an even worse failure than the first, and nothing remains to him except to go out and meet the jury of fate again. The answer is given and the veiled figure of Death deals the final blow in a wild night scene in a forest.

The whole thing is like one of the serials now so popular in the magazines—a series of episodes around a central character, like "Raffles" for example, each instalment practically complete in itself. They make excellent instalments but are not so successful when you get them altogether in book form.

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By all odds the most appetising item in London's future theatrical bill of fare is Pinero's new play, "His House in Order," which George Alexander is going to give at the St. James early next month. Oddly enough, in writing a play Pinero never begins with the plot. That, he says, grows out of the men and women he conjures up, and he expects them to tell him the story. He writes mostly at night, and not especially quickly, and declares that he works as much on his bicycle or when walking as at his desk. As to his characters, Pinero finds them in all sorts of ways—in a newspaper paragraph, in a railway train, at a party or wherever he may be. Perhaps it may be only the germ of a character that presents itself to him in this way, but he makes a note of it in his "Every Day," as he calls it—a huge commonplace book which by this time contains suggestions of plots and characters without number—and works up the idea in due course. And once Pinero has got on familiar terms with his "people" he likes to run away to the country and work out his theme there—preferably at some old inn where there is nothing whatever to remind him of town.

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Both English and French playgoers are inclined to regard that "new work" of Edmond Rostand's as a sort of theatrical Mrs. Harris. They are beginning to believe that there ain't no such piece as "Chanteclair." Promised for three years or more, it was to be given definitely on Coquelin's return to Paris after his South American trip, but though the actor got back several months ago, the much anticipated first night, or rather "repetition general" seems as far off as ever.

Probably M. Rostand feels that his long delayed bird-drama requires still more "polishing." In the interim, however, he and Coquelin have had an exceptional chance to discuss the details of its production, for the actor—who has not been especially well lately—has been passing the past fortnight as M. Rostand's guest at Cambo in the Pyrenees. Moreover, the distinguished twain have been installed in the much discussed country mansion which has been building for the dramatist for over a year, and on which he recently declared he had lavished his last sou.

Coquelin is no writer, but on his holiday in the Pyrenees he has been accompanied by Henry Bauer, who used to be one of the most influential of French dramatic critics, and for him we at least have something like a detailed description of the mansion whose fittings, according to Rostand, have eaten up every cent of the money that he made out of "L'Aiglon."

That this mansion would be unique in its way there was not much question, and from what Bauer tells us about it, it undoubtedly deserves his enthusiastic description as "a poet's dream come true." Rostand has named his new home "Amaga," which means, in the Basque dialect, "The Castle of Hearts," and one of his happiest fancies in connection with it is that each of his friends has a room arranged for him with his name on the door, and portraits of him and appropriate inscriptions on the walls inside.

So after all, perhaps the real reason that "Chanteclair" is not produced is that Rostand is too busy getting settled in his new home to come back to Paris and take charge of a production. Evidently it is not Coquelin's slight indisposition which is making the delay, for besides being almost well, the actor has arranged to make his reappearance in the capital in a new piece by Alfred Capus, who wrote "The Two Schools." Incidentally, Capus is on the point of starting for Cambo to confer with Coquelin regarding his new piece and one can't help feeling that the causeries at "Amaga" between the two most successful French dramatists of their generation, and the greatest of French comedians would be worth going a long way to hear.

* * *

In London unusual interest is being taken in the promised musical comedy version of "Romeo and Juliet," in which Edna May is going to make her reappearance here. It is being written by Capt. Basil Hood and Leslie Stewart, and they have got on so fast that the first performance of the piece is now scheduled for the end of March. No name has yet been chosen for the piece, but the first act represents a charity bazaar where the "opposing houses" of Montague and Capulet, or rather their modern representatives, control stalls. It is here that the lovers first meet, and the second act takes us to the house of Julia's father—a Mayfair mansion, whose interior is expected to furnish a stage picture equal to that of the young duke's house in "The Catch of the Season." Capt. Hood by the way, seems to be very much "in it" at present, for besides writing this "book" for Charles Frohman he is engaged in adapting the two French musical plays which George Edwardes intends to give at Daly's after Messager's popular "Little Michus" has reached the end of its tether.

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In Vienna the paid "claque" is about to be superseded. As most Americans know, the claque of European theaters consists of certain individuals whom the managers pay to applaud, and ordinarily one would be glad to see them displaced on any terms. But in Vienna the new order of things is worse than the old, for there a theatrical manager has invented a mechanical claque! Run by machinery it consists of a number of leather bags filled with air which, when struck one against another, produces the same effect as hand-clapping. Hereafter, accordingly when audiences at this theater prove unappreciative it will be necessary only to press a button and there will be "rounds of applause." Whether the people on the stage will be stimulated by such machine-made plaudits is questionable, but probably the effect on patrons will be the same, and at all events the manager will save money by dispensing with his human claque.

CURTIS BROWN.